

ACROSS THE PLAINS, MOUNTAINS, AND DESERTS

*A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail,
1812–1912*

For a Historic Resource Study of the
Oregon & California National Historic Trails



Ed. by

Will Bagley

Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts: A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail, 1812–1912 *provides information for accessing more than 2,600 primary overland accounts and almost 2,000 secondary sources. Resources cited describe life on the trail, frontier justice, exploration with ox-teams, and encounters with Native peoples. Sources include books, magazine and newspaper articles, government documents, maps, and manuscript collections.*

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From William A. Bell, *New Tracks in North America*, 1869.
Courtesy of the Beinecke Library.

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ACROSS THE PLAINS, MOUNTAINS, AND DESERTS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAIL

For A Historic Resource Study of the
Oregon & California National Historic Trails

PREFACE TO THE 2015 EDITION

As Matthew Joseph Bruccoli noted, "Publication is the essential act of scholarship, but all bibliographies are works in progress." As this revised, updated edition demonstrates, this one is no different.

The primary purpose of *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts: A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail* is to support the Historic Resource Study of the Oregon and California National Historic Trails I began long ago for the National Park Service (NPS). This study involved research and writing "to further the planning, development, operation and protection of the Oregon and California National Historic Trails, authorized by Congress as components of the National Trails System in 1978 and 1992." It sought to "synthesize the research material for a comprehensive narrative of the trails" and "assemble a body of research materials in electronic and hard copy format." The information will be included in the database the NPS and other federal agencies use to administer and manage the trails, and components will be "available to visitors, researchers, writers, publishers, and students of the trail."

Over time, the "comprehensive narrative of the trails" grew like Topsy, along with my vision of what such a comprehensive history should look like. The single report called for in the original Cooperative Agreement expanded into three parts: a research report; a chronological narrative, "'The Long and Arduous Journey': The Story of the Oregon & California Trails, 1840 to 1870"; and a social history, "'A Long, Rugged, and Weary Road': Life on the Oregon & California Trails, 1840 to 1870." I submitted a 144,000-word draft of the social history in March 2006, but it only included six chapters, and the 225,000-word draft of the narrative history submitted in July 2006 only covered up to 1850. (The drafts of

the social and narrative histories are now up to 600,00 words.) I delivered documentation of the research component of the study, with contributions by Lesley Wischmann and the late Bob Wier of East Texas State University, to the NPS in 2007 (and updated it in 2011) as “‘The Change Time Has Wrought’: The Legacy and Historic Resources of the Oregon & California National Historic Trails.” I provided a draft of this bibliography, which was ably copy edited by Nicky Leach, to the Park Service in June 2008.

Since then the University of Oklahoma Press has published two volumes of this comprehensive trails narrative in its “Overland West: The Story of the Oregon and California Trails” series, which will ultimately consist of four volumes. A secondary purpose of this bibliography is to support the Overland West series. *So Rugged and Mountainous: Blazing the Trails to Oregon and California, 1812–1848* appeared in 2010; and *With Golden Visions Bright Before Them: Trails to the Mining West, 1849-1852* in 2012. The last two volumes, “The Long and Perilous Journey: Trails Transform the West, 1853–1860” and “The War for the Medicine Road: Trails, War, and Conquest, 1861–1912” are in process. Another University of Oklahoma Press volume, *South Pass: Gateway to a Continent*, appeared in April 2014 and covers the years from 1853 to 1870 in considerable detail.

This bibliography contains citation information for every work used in the Historic Resource Study of the Oregon and California National Historic Trails study and the Overland West series. It provides separate listings for primary sources and secondary sources such as books, articles, and dissertations. (Complete citations for most newspaper articles are provided in the text of the study.) *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts* owes a tremendous debt to historian Merrill J. Mattes’s masterwork, *Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel over the Great Central Overland Route to Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Montana, and Other Western States and Territories, 1812–1866* (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 1988). Mattes listed 2,082 documents describing yearly travel along the Platte River over the Oregon, California, and Mormon National Historic Trails between 1812 and 1866. Regarded as the definitive annotated overland trails bibliography, *Platte River Road Narratives* helped inspire renewed interest in overland trails to the Pacific. For a quarter

century it has informed all of us who love the story of our nation's past, and it will stand as the foundation for any scholar seeking to understand the essential role overland trails played in the creation of today's American West.

Thanks to the ongoing work of Western history libraries and archives, the good efforts of the Oregon-California Trails Association and the Merrill Mattes Library, and the explosion of material on the Internet, the documentary record of America's overland wagon roads has grown dramatically since Mattes completed *Platte River Road Narratives*, which itself tripled the number of catalogued overland sources. *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts: A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail* lists about 2,637 personal narratives of overland travel. I have examined and have copies of most of the sources included in *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts*. Many entries list the number and rating (for example, "Mattes 999, 2 stars") assigned to it in Merrill J. Mattes's magisterial *Platte River Road Narratives*. When the entry includes such a note, it may indicate I have not examined the item.

The scope of *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts* is not limited to civilian travelers bound to Oregon or California in the nineteenth century. It encompasses the primary accounts of anyone going "The Plains Across," to use the phrase Noah Brooks applied to his 1902 recollection of his 1859 trek, which John D. Unruh Jr. gave new life as the title of his definitive social history, *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-1860*, in 1979. This bibliography does not discriminate against fur traders, Frenchmen, soldiers, expressmen, merchants, miners bound for Pikes Peak or Montana, or Mormons bound for Utah. If a man, woman, or child left an account of their experiences crossing the northern overland route across the Great Plains, whether going of east or west, I hope it appears here. The glaring exception to this is *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts'* random selection of sources from the California Trail's southern route, whose exploration is so ably chronicled in Harlan Hague's *The Road to California: The Search for a Southern Overland Route* (Glendale, Calif: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1978). Elliott West's "Foreword" and Patricia A. Etter's annotated bibliography, *To California on the Southern Route 1849: A History and Annotated Bibliography* (Spokane: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1998), help mitigate this omission.

This bibliography uses several terms to identify the nature of its sources. It occasionally uses “journal” and “diary” as interchangeable terms, especially if the author identified their work as one or the other, but like Mattes, I regard a true diary as “a narrative that was composed, normally on a daily basis, while the traveler was en route. It is, in other words, the original field book.” A journal, on the other hand, “is a detailed progressive account, usually not on a straight daily basis, written soon after the journey, and sometimes based on an actual diary or field notes, as well as recollections.” If an item inaccurately calls itself a diary or journal, I try to identify it as a recollection, reminiscence, or autobiography. The term “recollection” generally identifies an account written relatively close to the experience, say within twenty years, while less-reliable reminiscences and autobiographies are often written much, much later. Contemporary sources—letters, diaries, and newspaper reports—are typically more accurate and historically valuable, but as Mattes observed, all recollections and even reminiscences recalled late in life “have some degree of value, and some of them are surprisingly accurate and readable.”

For the last fourteen years I have been engaged in a great adventure: seeking out the historic resources of the Oregon and California National Historic Trails—the narratives, histories, government documents, maps, works of art, newspaper and periodical articles, folk songs, and physical remnants that constitute the historic record of America’s overland wagon roads and form a significant part of our nation’s legacy. It has been a dream assignment, but it is also intimidating and disheartening, since the more one understands the size and complexity of that record, the less one can ever hope to master it. I am painfully aware of this work’s faults and limitations as a trail bibliography; for example, it does not include every relevant article from *Overland Journal*, the foremost magazine of trails scholarship, or every source cited in *Platte River Road Narratives*. For a more comprehensive resource of one period, see the online “The Gold Rush of California” bibliography by Librarian and University Archivist Robert LeRoy Santos at California State University. You can access digital copies at <http://www.library.csustan.edu/bsantos/goldrush/GOLDCHP1.HTM> and <http://www.library.csustan.edu/bsantos/goldrush/GOLDCHP2.HTM> [15 January 2014]

Those who believe consistency is the bugaboo of small minds will find *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts* wonderfully broadminded. The best a historian can hope to accomplish is to contribute to our understanding of this legacy and aspire to create a work that will inspire and assist anyone interested in learning more about this remarkable period.

WHAT'S NEW?

What's new and different in this revised edition? First, it incorporates additions, updates, and corrections from Don Buck, Kevin Henson, Loren Pospisil of the Nebraska State Historical Society, and other attentive readers. The 2015 version corrects uncounted typographical and formatting errors and has added several hundred numbers and ratings from Mattes's *Platte River Road Narratives*. Finally, this edition lists more than 150 additional overland narratives and is, to be precise, 10,622 words longer than the 2014 edition.

The study of the overland trail and its scholarly resources is a work in progress, and so is this bibliography, which is far from being a comprehensive list of trail narratives and sources. These documents contain detailed and specific information on the Indian nations that called the trail home, the historic landscape and trail sites, alternate trail routes, scenery, vegetation, weather, and wildlife that is invaluable to understanding and comparing the state of trails in the mid-nineteenth century with today's National Historic Trails. Overland narratives tell the stories and bring to life the men, women, and children who pushed our nation's frontier to the Pacific during the mid-nineteenth century and transformed the region, themselves, and the lives of the Native peoples. Every account adds something to this epic story that did so much to forge the American West we know today. "Each overland journal is a reflection of a folk experience and a time spirit," historian Dale L. Morgan said at Santa Fe in 1961. "In their journals westering Americans set down a collective national self-portrait, a mosaic in words. The mosaic can never be altogether filled in, never amount to a final creation. Each journal that is found alters some detail, and gives fresh play to our imagination as well as our understanding. It is rather wonderful to think that this can go on forever."

—Will Bagley

NFTC	Washington, D.C.
Oregon Historical Society:	National Frontier Trails Center, Independence, Mo. Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland, Oregon.
Sherratt Library	Special Collections, Gerald R. Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah.
Society of California Pioneers:	Alice Phelan Sullivan Library, The Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, California.
UCLA:	Special Collections, University of California at Los Angeles.
Western Historical Manuscripts:	State Historical Society of Missouri Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Ellis Library, University of Missouri-Columbia.
University of Oregon Library:	Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon.

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PART I: PRIMARY SOURCES

For a Historic Resource Study of the
Oregon & California National Historic Trails



Will Bagley

PRIMARY SOURCES EDITORIAL PROCEDURES

The primary sources section of *Across the Plains, Mountains, and Deserts* consists of four separate elements: the first lists narratives—letters, diaries and journals, and recollections and reminiscences—by people who crossed the Oregon-California Trails and wrote about it; the second section includes guidebooks and gazetteers from the main trail era; the third consists of post-1870 overland wagon travel sources; and the fourth lists modern trail accounts. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between trail accounts and guidebooks, so there is considerable overlap between the sections. The bibliography contains links to almost nine hundred full-text versions of these firsthand overland narratives. Sites such as the Library of Congress, the Digital Public Library of America, Google Books, and the Internet Archive provide access to many other online overland narratives that are cited but not linked in this bibliography. This is only a fraction of the full text versions of more than 3,500 trail sources the Church History Department and Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has made available on its website, Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847–1868, at <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/> [10 January 2014].

The names of authors begin each entry, along with information to identify the nature of the source, that is, whether it is a letter, diary, or recollection, and the archive or publication where a scholar can find it. Wherever possible, when the title of the source does not specify the date of the overland account, the date is provided in brackets: [Date]. These citations incorporate several personal preferences, notably the use of a single colon in place of a period and colon. Where applicable, page ranges appear at the end of the entry but before Internet links. Newspaper citations identify the place they were published, the information needed to locate them, and are to page / column, for example 2 / 3, when such data is available. Book titles are in italics, while article, thesis, and dissertation titles are in plain text with quotation marks. Manuscript citations appear without quotation marks. The bibliography preserves the grammar, spelling, and diction of the original. Underlined text is italicized. [Sic] is used sparingly. Brackets enclose added letters, missing words, and conjectural readings. Internet addresses and links indicate the date the site was accessed in

brackets: [16 January 2007]. I have tried to insure that all the links are “live,” but given the transitory nature of the Internet, a few sites may no longer be active. Such sources can often be located with a simple search of the author or title of the narrative. Sources published before 1923 are in the public domain, and the full text of many of them can be found online. The phrase “Digital copy formerly at” identifies inactive links, and the note “copy in possession of author” indicates I have a copy I would be happy to share.

As a simple listing of sources, this work pays homage to but merely supplements Merrill J. Mattes’s annotated masterpiece, *Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel over the Great Central Overland Route*. An annotated bibliography of almost six hundred “additions to Mattes” is available on request.

Part I: Primary Sources, 1812–1912

A

Abbey, James. *California. A Trip across the Plains, in the Spring of 1850, Being a Daily Record of Incidents of the Trip over the Plains, the Desert, and the Mountains, Sketches of the Country, Distances from Camp to Camp, Etc., and Containing Valuable Information to Emigrants, as to Where They Will Find Wood, Water, and Grass at Almost Every Step of the Journey.* By James Abbey. New Albany, Ind: Kent & Norman, and J. R. Nunemacher, 1850. Reprinted Tarrytown, N.Y: W. Abbatt, 1933. Mattes 710, 3 stars. Digital copy at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/calbk.151> [21 March 2006].

Abbott, Aaron. Letters, 15 September 1852 and 5 June 1856. Bentley Library and OCTA Manuscripts, Mattes Library. Mattes 1095, 1 star.

Abbott, Carlisle S. *Recollections of a California Pioneer* [1850 and 1852]. New York, N.Y: Neale Publishing Co., 1917. Mattes 711, 2 stars. Digital copy at <http://archive.org/details/recollectionsofc00abbo> [24 March 2013].

Abell, James Scott. Journal of Trip to the California Gold Fields, 1849–1850. In James Scott Abell and family papers, 1814-1876, Minnesota Historical Society. Mattes 338, 4 stars.

Ables, T. J. Letter, 12 October 1857. Typescript, Huntington Library and Newberry Library. Mattes 1583, 2 stars.

Abrams, Myra Skeels. Across the Plains to Montana in 1864. MSS #1525, Colorado Historical Society.

Ackley, Mary E. [Medley]. *Crossing the Plains and Early Days in California.* San Francisco, Calif: 1928, 13–34. Mattes 1096, 2 stars.

Ackley, Richard Thomas. "Across the Plains in 1858." Ed. by Dale L. Morgan. *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 9:3–4 (1941), 190–228. Digital copy at files.lib.byu.edu/mormonmigration/articles/acrosstheplains0001.pdf [16 February 2014]. Mattes 1628, 4 stars.

Adair, Sarah Damron. "Sarah Damron Adair, Pioneer of 1843." *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, 23rd Reunion, 1895, 65–82. Mattes 71, 2 stars.

Adams, Cecilia Emily McMillan [and Parthenia McMillan Blank]. "Crossing the Plains in 1852." *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, 32nd Reunion, 1904, 288–329. See also Holmes, "Twin Sisters on the Oregon Trail," *Covered Wagon Women* (1986), 5:253–312. Mattes 1097, 3 stars.

Adams, Ellen Tompkins. Diary of overland journey from Council Bluffs, Iowa to Markleeville, California, May to August 1863. MSS C-F 114, Bancroft Library. Mattes 1876, 2 stars.

Adams, Franklin E. Overland Diary, 1865. Franklin E. Adams Papers, American Heritage Center. Selections published in "The Overland Trail Diary of Franklin

E. Adams: Upward Bound in 1865." Ed. by Walter Edens. *Overland Journal* 5:4 (Fall 1987), 8–23.

Ahmanson, John. *Vor Tids Muhamed* [1856]. Omaha, Nebr: Press of the Danish Pioneer, 1876. Republished as *Secret History: A Translation of Vor Tids Muhamed*. Trans. by Gleason L. Archer. Chicago, Ill: Moody Press, 1984. Digital copy at <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-7422,00.html> [5 September 2006]. Mattes 1536, 3 stars.

Aitken, William Knox. "Adventures of a Mormon," 11 July 1857. *London Advertiser*, 9 August 1857. Digital copy at <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-15918,00.html> [6 August 2006].

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Akin, James, Jr. "Diary of James Akin, Jr." [1852]. *Transactions of the 36th Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association, Portland, June 11th, 1908*, 259–74. 1852. Reprinted as *The Journal of James Akin, Jr.* Ed. by Edward Everett Dale. Norman, Okla: University of Oklahoma, 1919. Digital copy at <http://www.isu.edu/~trinnich/00.ar.akin.html> [25 April 2006]. Mattes 1098, 2 stars.

Alcorn, Israel Putnam. *Overland Journal*, 25 April to 15 September 1856, West Point, Missouri to Volcano, California. BANC MSS 76/158 c, Bancroft Library. Mattes 1537, 1 star.

Alden, Wyllis, Rev. "Overland Journey to Oregon" [1851]. In Harriett Chapman Fielding, *The Ancestors and Descendants of Isaac Alden and Irene Smith, His Wife, 1590–1903*. Orange, N.J: By the author, 1903, 45–49. Digital copy at http://archive.org/stream/ancestorsdescend00fiel/ancestorsdescend00fiel_djvu.txt [16 February 2014]. Mattes 1032, 2 stars.

Aldrich, Hannah Mason. Interview account of 1856 Martin handcart company. In "Utah Pioneer Biographies," 44 vols., 3:55–58. Digital copy at <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&sourceId=10172> [16 February 2014]. Mattes 1538, 1 star.

Aldrich, Lorenzo D. *A Journal of the [Southern] Overland Route to California and the Gold Mines*. Lansingburgh, N.Y: Alexr. Kirkpatrick, Printer, 1851.

Alexander, William. Daily Record of an Overland Journey to California, 17 May to 25 Sept 1859. Typescript, MSS C-F 7, Bancroft Library. Mattes 1650, 1 star.

Alldredge, Isaac. Journal History of Isaac Alldredge II [1866]. Digital copy at <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~cballdredge/alldredge/isaac2.html> [1 October 2005].

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“Edward Jay Allen on the Trail.” *Overland Journal* 30:2 (Fall 2012), 109–18. Mattes 1099, 3 stars.

Allen, Elijah. Recollection of Mormon Battalion and 1848 Trek from San Gabriel Mission to Missouri River. Autobiographical Sketch, LDS Archives. Digital copy at <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&companyId=366&sourceId=18018> [15 June 2014].

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Allen, William R. Letter to My Dear Brother, 4 May 1851. Mss 655, Oregon Society Library. Mattes 1033, 1 star.

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Allred, Isabelle Wade. Interview Account of 1868 Plains Crossing. In *Utah Pioneer Biographies*, 44 vols., 3:104-5. Digital copy at <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&pioneerId=36546&sourceId=5689> [16 February 2014]. Mattes 2044, 3 stars.

Allred, Redick Newton. Autobiographical Sketch and Diary, 1847, 1849, 1855. LDS Archives. Digital copies at [1847]: <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&pioneerId=43043&sourceId=18995>; [1849]: <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&pioneerId=3869&sourceId=6175>; and [1855]: <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&pioneerId=42649&sourceId=18976> [16 February 2014]. Mattes 208, 3 stars.

Allsop, I. P. C. Leaves from My Scrapbook [1848], Bancroft Library, 33–34. Mattes 287, 1 star.

Allyn, Henry. “Journal of Henry Allyn” [1853]. *Transactions of the Forty-ninth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association, Portland, June 16, 1921*, 372–435. Also see Oregon Historical Society Mss #1508. Digital copy at <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jkidd/books/OPAT/49/13.htm> [8 January 2010]. Mattes 1333, 4 stars.

Allyn, Joseph Pratt. *By Horse, Stage & Packet: The Far West Letters of Joseph Pratt Allyn* [1866]. Ed. by John Nicolson, David K. Strate, editors. San Francisco, Calif: Book Club of California, 1988.

Alton, Hiram. *Overland Journey from Ohio to California, 1864*. WA MSS 4, Beinecke Library. Mattes 1921, 3 stars.

Alvard, Mary Ann. *Agreement between Mary Ann Alvard, John L. Houghton and D. Gillespie, 1849*. MSS #2200, Colorado Historical Society.

Ames, Alson L. *Diary of Alson L. Ames Kept During His Trip from Illinois to California, May 21 to September 13, 1852*. Typescript and partial manuscript in author's possession.

Ames, Ira. *Journal and Record of the Life and Family of Ira Ames [1851]*. MSS A 5199, Utah State Historical Society. See also Ira Ames, *Autobiography and Journal, 1851*, LDS Archives. Digital copy at <http://lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/1,18016,4976-5453,00.html> [17 April 2011].

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Anderson, William Wright. "The Diary and Memoirs of William Wright Anderson, Oregon Pioneer [1848] and Forty-niner." Ed. by Williams, F. Michael. Ph.D. Dissertation, Ball State University, 1984. Mattes 288, 4 stars.

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guides and it was designed to take advantage of the gold fever sweeping the continent. Simpson, despite the claims in the text, never made a trip to California or stayed in the mines. Further, Simpson was never a member of the New York Volunteers as stated on the title page's author statement. Like many publications of the day, it pulled together information from various sources including Colonel R. B. Mason's reliable report on the gold diggings and an article from the *New York Herald* of December 13, 1848.

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ACROSS THE PLAINS, MOUNTAINS, AND DESERTS

*A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail,
1812–1912*

PART II: SECONDARY SOURCES

For a Historic Resource Study of the
Oregon & California National Historic Trails



Will Bagley

SECONDARY SOURCES EDITORIAL PROCEDURES

The listings of secondary sources are divided into sections for Books; Fiction; Periodicals, Essays, and Chapters; Theses and Dissertations; Newspaper Articles; Manuscript Collections; Government Documents, Reports, and Studies; Web sites and on-line articles; Maps; and Bibliographies. Each entry begins with the name of its author (or authors), followed by the work's title. Citations for books list the place, the publisher, and the date of publication. It uses the abbreviations for U.S. states found in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, not the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations. If this information is unavailable, it is omitted. These listings incorporate several personal preferences, notably the use of a single colon in place of a period and colon, a habit acquired from working with the venerable Arthur H. Clark Company. Where applicable, page ranges identify the location of the overland material and appear at the end of the entry but before Internet links. Newspaper citations contain the information needed to locate them and are to page/column: 2/3, when such data is available. Book titles are in italics, while article, thesis, and dissertation titles are in plain text with quotation marks. Manuscript citations appear without quotation marks. The bibliography preserves the grammar, spelling, and diction of the original. Underlined text is italicized. [*Sic*] is used sparingly. Brackets enclose added letters, missing words, and conjectural readings.

Please send updates, additions, and corrections to wlbagley@xmission.com

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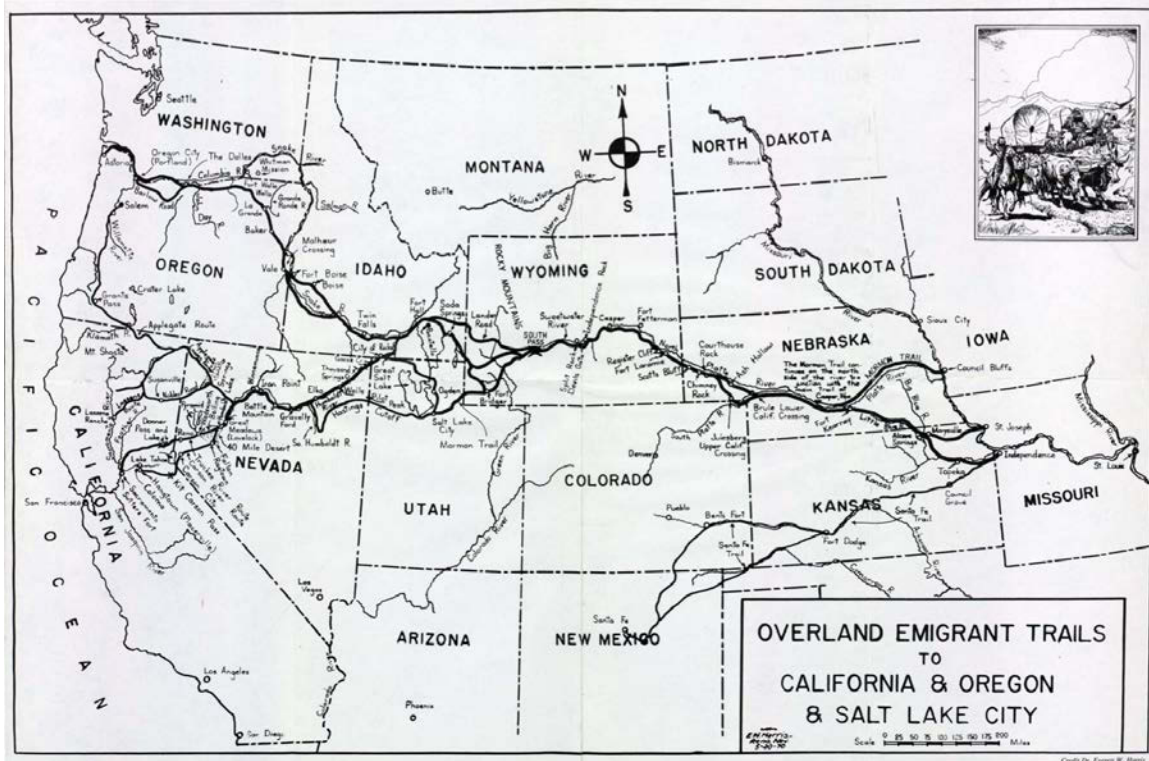
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